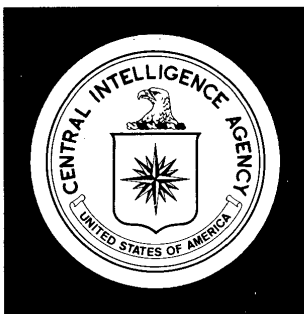




The President's Daily Brief

3 May 1973

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

3 May 1973

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

Heavy fighting has resumed in Lebanon this morning.
(Page 1)

The Soviets are again trying to convince the Japanese to compromise on the Northern Territories issue. (Page 2)

Fidel Castro is urging Latin Americans to unite against the US. (Page 3)

The weakness of the Greek Government is becoming more and more apparent. (Page 4)

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[REDACTED] (Page 7)

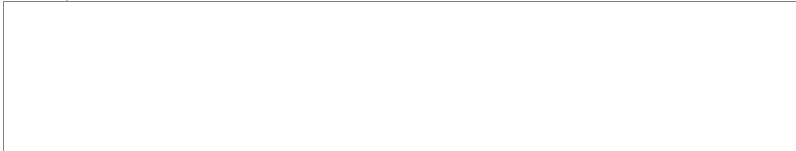
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LEBANON-FEDAYEEN

The cease-fire arranged between Yasir Arafat and President Franjiyah after heavy fighting between the army and the fedayeen in Beirut yesterday has broken down. Serious fighting was resumed this morning, and is reported to have spread south to Sidon.



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The Lebanese Defense Ministry claimed the fighting started yesterday after the fedayeen rocketed army positions in the southern suburbs of the capital while negotiations were under way for the release of two Lebanese soldiers seized by the guerrillas Tuesday. Lebanese forces, supported by tanks and armored vehicles, then surrounded all Palestinian refugee camps in Beirut and returned the fire.

The Lebanese lost 12 killed and 40 wounded. Guerrilla losses are presumed to be much heavier.

The clashes are the most serious since those of 1969 that left Lebanon without a government for months. The subsequent release of the kidnaped soldiers helped to calm the situation somewhat, but independent action by some fedayeen could trigger further fighting. For example, during yesterday's fighting, terrorists fired rockets at the US Ambassador's residence, but missed.

Increased fedayeen activity in Beirut and along the southern border with Israel since the Israeli raid on April 10 have severely strained Lebanon's relations with the Palestinians. During the past week three guerrillas were arrested at the Beirut airport as they tried to smuggle explosives out of the country. A number of others have been detained in connection with an apparent attempt to attack the US Embassy.

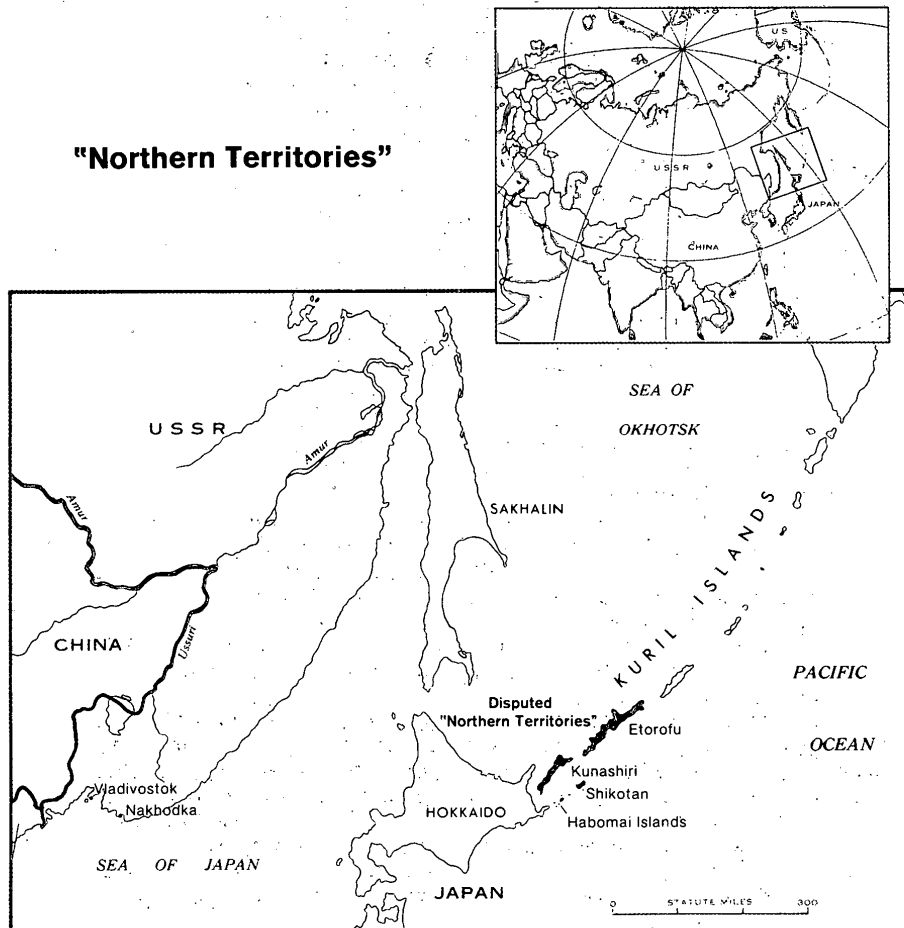
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The kidnaping of the two soldiers was intended to force the release of these fedayeen.



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"Northern Territories"



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USSR-JAPAN

The Soviets are again making discreet attempts to get Japan to think seriously about compromising on the Northern Territories problem.

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Unofficial statements have been made [redacted] recently that the USSR is willing to return two of the islands (Habomai and Shikotan) claimed by Japan when a peace treaty is signed and that there would be "joint use" of the other two major islands.

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The USSR made such informal soundings last year, but concluded that the Japanese were trying to capitalize on their improved relations with China in order to force the Soviet Union to return all the islands immediately. To discourage this tactic, the Soviets gave the Japanese territorial demands short shrift.

The USSR maintained this tougher stand until early March, when an exchange of letters between Tanaka and Brezhnev brought some improvement in the atmosphere. Tanaka helped break the ice by promising conditionally that Japan would back the \$1-billion Tyumen oil project without requiring prior solution of territorial problems.

After the Tanaka-Brezhnev exchange, Soviet media abruptly stopped mentioning the Northern Territories as the major stumbling block to improvement in Soviet-Japanese political ties. The Soviets have focused instead on prospects for economic cooperation, and have made no secret of their hope that a common interest in better relations across the board will help settle the territorial issue. In floating possible compromise solutions, the Soviets have their eye on Tanaka's visit to the USSR late this summer when the Northern Territories question is certain to arise.

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CUBA

Fidel Castro's May Day speech was an attempt to place Cuba in the forefront of a Latin America united against the US.

Castro recited the standard litany of Latin American complaints against the US, specifically identifying himself with Latin American positions on sovereignty over natural resources, US trade barriers, and the planned sale of US mineral stockpiles. He indicated his willingness to cooperate with those countries that demonstrate their independence of the US, and implied his definition of such independence is increasingly flexible. Castro said again that Cuba wants nothing to do with the OAS so long as the US is a member.

Castro described the economic blockade as a bar to the opening of a dialogue with the US. He specifically rejected any secret talks. This frigid tone probably reflects Castro's concern about the implications for Cuba of Brezhnev's expected visit to the US. He may press Brezhnev to visit Cuba, either before or after the Washington trip, in order to seek assurances that Cuban interests will not be compromised.

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GREECE

The government of Prime Minister Papadopoulos has recently been sharply attacked by former prime minister Karamanlis, joined by a number of old guard politicians anxious to be counted with him.

Of itself, the attack is not a serious blow to the government; it nonetheless indicates that Papadopoulos' position is weakening. The ruling military junta has never lived up to the promises of its "revolution" six years ago. It has failed in its efforts to:

- make the government efficient and responsive,*
- work out a political system that would permit popular participation in government, and*
- formally resolve the status of the monarchy and institute a stable new system of government.*

Politically conscious Greeks sense that the Papadopoulos administration is losing steam, and as it enters its seventh year, symptoms of political malaise are plentiful:

- Disobedient students continue their opposition to the government even after their revolt was suppressed and civil libertarians who defended them were jailed.*
- Troubles on Cyprus between General Grivas and President Makarios threaten to get out of hand at a time when stability on Cyprus and a peaceful relationship with Turkey are top priority to Athens. The Turks are now worried that Grivas' violence may engulf the Turkish minority. They have asked Athens to curb the General. But the Papadopoulos government cannot control him.*

(continued)

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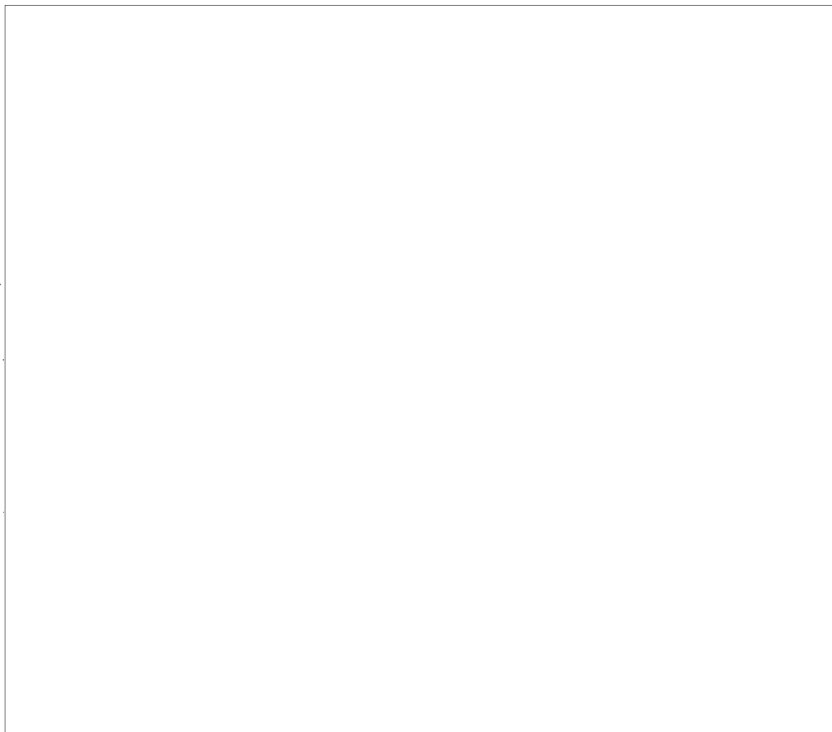
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--Military officers disgusted with the ineffectiveness of the government have stepped up their plotting against Papadopoulos in the past year. Only their lack of unity and Papadopoulos' vigilance has kept a military coup from succeeding.

Papadopoulos is aware of the symptoms and the basic issues they represent, but he does not appear to have workable ideas about how to tackle them. Behind the scenes, for example, he has ordered the formation of a new "cultural organization" known as EPOK, a group he hopes will provide Greece's future political leaders. This move has already run into trouble. Some military men, for instance, oppose the inclusion of socialists and center-leftists among EPOK's membership, and excluded old guard politicians are obstructing the group's formation because they see it undercutting any chance of returning to power.

Papadopoulos is vulnerable, but at present is not weak enough to be thrown out of office by anyone but a concerted group of military officers. Such a group has yet to materialize. The outlook for Greece, therefore, is more of the same political uncertainty and popular dissatisfaction.

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NOTES

Cambodia:

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An intercepted Khmer Communist message of April 27 reveals that a large supply of B-40 rockets, rocket launchers, and some small-arms ammunition is being transported to Communist units in the Phnom Penh area.

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